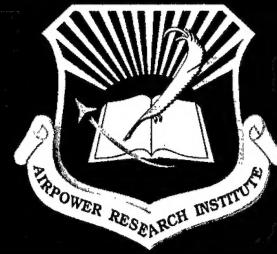


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Coalition Warfare: *Coordination and Planning Options*

Colonel Robyn Read, USAF, Retired

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Title of Paper: Coalition Warfare: Coordination and Planning Options

Author: Robyn Read, Col, USAF, Retired

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Executive Summary

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the world political environment has been, and continues to be, in constant change with evolving formats and cause-effect relationships. But “change,” in and of itself, is not a new phenomenon. More accurately for today, it is the rate of change and the lack of accurate lead indicators (i.e., the unpredictability) that complicate the coalition picture in the 21st Century. The results are, in general, short agendas with narrowly focused objectives and limited commitments.

This paper identifies some of the issues associated with coalition building and coordination and reports on two effective but distinct methods of meeting national requirements in this arena. Originally, the intent was to compare the US Central Command’s Coalition Coordination Center (CCC) in Tampa with the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) approach in US Pacific Command’s area of operation but a direct comparison was abandoned because these are simply unlike entities. Additionally, the report avoids repeating, at least in detail, the information already in print or available from US Central Command and US Pacific Command.¹ There is, however, much to discuss regarding how the two commands are approaching similar problems in dissimilar environments.

In general, Central Command creates its primary response options as if the US is acting alone. While there are exceptions, allies are, in essence, “strapped onto” the plan after the fact as capabilities and commitments become clear. The advantages are several with speed of action and confidence in the component parts at the high end of the list. Alternatively, US Pacific Command, in a collaborative affiliation with over 30 nations, has created a long-term process of engagement and planning that assumes, in general, that each action in the Pacific (not including Korea) will be coalition-based and collaboratively constructed. The system of conferences (to write common planning documents) and exercises is creating a familiarity (in both procedure and among the participants) that is forming a basis of trust for a future coalition. Though overstated somewhat, the Central Command approach is one of exclusiveness while the Pacific Command approach tends toward inclusiveness.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach and the fact that US Central Command has been actively engaged in combat for over ten years is no small determinant in its chosen path. Both approaches are constrained by training and “spin-up” times for establishing new or replacement staffs and, in this area, both commands should consider establishing a significant core staff capable of near-immediate activation. This paper recommends consideration of a *joint* reserve (or guard) affiliate for each combatant command with specific taskings in coalition planning and staffing areas.

¹ Both commands electronically publish operating instructions and procedures via the Internet though some sites are restricted access.

Other recommendations relate primarily to enhancing knowledge of non-US cultures and non-state organizations. These coalition-focused discussions lead to suggestions for an overall upgrade of “civil affairs” within US doctrine and also suggest a more specific doctrinal basis for education in these areas. The most significant shortfall common to both approaches is in the area of information sharing. It does not appear that a “common operating picture” for all coalition members can be done. The result is a tier system of allies that could have a crippling effect on trust and coalition stability.

One final caution on the “new world order.” Every situation is different; every solution must be tailored to its unique circumstances. At best, experience in this new set of conditions can provide a “snapshot” of what has or has not worked recently—it cannot predict with great confidence what will succeed today or tomorrow. As always, leadership will be the key.

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Section 1

Building the Partnership

I don't know half of you half as well as I should like; and I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve.

Bilbo Baggins, a character by JRR Tolkien (1892-1973)

The new world order¹ envisioned with the fall of the Soviet Union, and in the aftermath of the first Gulf War, has been little more than a false hope if you expected some “new” but similarly rigid political framework to replace the old establishment of national alignments. The truth is far different. Absent the unifying threat to sovereignty embodied in “massive retaliation,” every country today is basically on its own—that is, on its own time and agenda.² Realistically, individual states may see no threat at all, or one that has a substantially lesser priority on national resources than some alternative issue in a completely unrelated field. Each state, even those embedded within established alliances or treaty networks, now measures the degree to which it is threatened or “interested” in a world event almost solely in the context of its own immediate national priorities.³

The possibilities are diverse. Some countries have been driven to attain special military capabilities or even nuclear weapons to ratify their own security in the absence of a bi-polar balance of power. Others, including some with bi-lateral or multilateral defense arrangements, have spent decidedly less on security than may have been practically warranted because, for example, reduction of national debt took priority (resulting in aircraft without parts, etc.). Such a decision, to allow a nation’s military capability to slide, is more than a logical reaction to the lowered threat; it is a clear

¹ President Bush, speech to US Congress, March 6, 1991.

² For example, the Turkish agenda surrounding Operation Iraqi Freedom. Editorial, *Baltimore Sun*, “Arresting Allies,” July 14, 2003.

³ “I put Rwanda-Burundi on the list . . . but I received guidance from higher authorities, ‘Look, if something happens in Rwanda-Burundi, we don’t care. Take it off the list. It’s not—US national interest is not involved and, you know, we can’t put all these silly humanitarian issues on lists like important problems like the Middle East and North Korea and so on.’ Interview with James Woods, former Dep. Asst. Secretary of Defense; PBS FRONTLINE #1710, “The Triumph of Evil;” Air Date: January 26, 1999; written by Steve Bradshaw, Ben Loeterman.

reassertion of national features over the collective face of an alliance. Even the world's centerpiece defense alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is affected.

NATO has been rumored to be on the brink of dissolution as a military alliance for years because of such internal dissent regarding interests and priority. Even its own *Committee Report on Non-Military Cooperation* has questioned NATO's future without "the common binding force of fear."⁴ Without the Soviet-led threat to sovereignty, NATO's 19 members act as states first, and then as NATO members. Consequently, this diminished focus on a single foe elevates a number of diverse, and previously second-tier, national concerns. The combination of dispersed national interests and the alliance's prerequisite for no dissent in order to take action clearly decreases the probability of a rapid military response, if any, from NATO.⁵ Its expanding membership can only underscore the alliance's fragility. On matters of "lesser" national importance, how can 19 countries (26 countries in 2004) agree unanimously to any significant commitment of resources?⁶ As a consequence, these internal disputes weaken NATO's credibility as a fighting alliance.⁷

Mixing internal issues with external issues to form an integrated funding priorities list is not only legitimate, but also rather common in today's environment. Accordingly, because there are so many distinct variables and cause-effect relationships that form a country's "interest," ostensibly comparable events distanced only in time may evoke quite opposite responses from the same country or group of countries. Any tendency in such an environment to "mirror-image" an enemy or a friend, or to attempt to predict their inclination to engage in some future event, can result in significantly flawed assumptions.⁸

The operative concept in this new world order is indeed "change" but not in the sense that something new has formed. Rather, it is more akin to something constantly in motion and continually altering its presentation—not changed or adapted or transformed, but changing and adapting, and especially for the military—transforming. Because there is no overriding threat, thus no general challenge to the sovereignty of states, the nexus of interests among potential allies is temporal at best and difficult to predict with any conviction. This feature of constant, non-linear change creates a political environment that favors ad hoc arrangements rather than long-term commitments. For the military, this

⁴ *Committee Report on Non-Military Cooperation*, North Atlantic Council, 5 October 2000.

⁵ NATO actions, including all major decisions, are taken only by "common consent," not majority vote, <http://www.nato.int>.

⁶ "Despite the 50-year alliance, Germany and France declined to join the US, Spain and the UK during Operation Iraqi Freedom." Elaine Sciolino, "France Declines US Call . ." *New York Times*, July 16, 2003. See also, Keith B. Richburg, "NATO Role In Iraq Faces Snags . ." *Washington Post*, July 12, 2003.

⁷ "Soured relations illustrate the basic problems with NATO these days: The coalition has no common enemy or well defined mission." Editorial, "At Last, A New Mission For NATO," *Colorado Springs Gazette*, July 14, 2003.

⁸ Part of the rationale for US involvement in the war in Kosovo was preservation of NATO. Prior relationships (Albania) and divergent interests, specifically for Greece and Turkey, could have led to an active war within the alliance as old issues emerged from the ashes of the Cold War. David Buckwalter, "Madeleine's War . ." *Time Magazine*, 17 May 1999.

means coalitions instead of alliances.⁹ Given the preceding discussion, it also means that existing alliances like NATO will function more like coalitions, as narrow and short-term goals will be the only efforts that can garner the required unanimity in this new age of balancing risk.

This new world environment also suggests that the center of attention will typically be a regional, if not local, event rather than any legitimately “global” consideration for combat or other military mission. Collectively, these factors tilt toward a prediction of war on the low end of the spectrum, with a preponderance of issues found within Military-Operations-Other-Than-War (MOOTW) settings. This does not preclude short, intense conflicts but the level of support necessary for long-term commitments to “intense” conflict are absent and will remain so until a new global threat to sovereignty emerges. This less-than-total commitment to war intermixed with competing national priorities and the basic fragility of coalitions in general drives states to pursue finite involvements and rapid resolutions. The ability, or at least the belief, that a state can get in and out of an event in a finite period of time limits their diversion of resources from other priorities and reduces the risk of still being in place when circumstances change, thus altering the basis for original assumptions. Speed becomes the great enabler.¹⁰

Some “people still have the tendency to measure the decisiveness of their organization by the number of people or the number of airplanes, but the right measure is how quickly you can impose the desired effect on your opponent.”¹¹ Tempo, or quickness, can plainly have a decisive quality in its own right.¹² Interviews after Operation Iraqi Freedom provide blunt illustrations of this fact:

“We weren’t prepared, but it didn’t matter because the tank assault was so fast and sudden,” said Gen Omar Abdul Karim, a regular army commander. “The Americans were able to divide and isolate our forces. Nobody had any idea what was going on until it was too late.” Karim himself did not realize the regime had collapsed until looters attempted to break into his headquarters April 9.¹³

⁹ A *coalition* is an ad hoc arrangement between two or more nations for common action. An *alliance* is the result of formal agreements (i.e., treaties) between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives that further the common interests of the members. *Multinational* refers to two or more forces or agencies of two or more nations or coalition partners. *Combined* refers to two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies. *Joint* connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate. From the *DOD Dictionary*, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>.

¹⁰ Not to be confused with “haste” which connotes rash or impetuous action.

¹¹ Air Force Col John Warden, a planner for the 1991 Operation Desert Storm. As quoted by Rowan Scarborough, “Decisive Force Now Measured By Speed,” *Washington Times*, 7 May 2003.

¹² See also, “The Cult of the Quick,” by Dr. Thomas Hughes, *Air and Space Power Journal*, Winter 2001, for a discussion using historical precedent that shows that a more gradual approach to warfare can achieve military objectives as well as the quick strike. “Speed,” in and of itself, is not the goal.

¹³ “Iraq’s Swift Defeat Blamed On Leaders—*Missteps and erratic orders by Hussein and his son Qusai . . .*” David Zucchino, *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 2003.

In that vein, “Speed Kills” has been recently popularized as an attestation to the overwhelming tactics and technology of the coalition forces during fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. But the truth is quite the opposite: speed saves lives—coalition and enemy, combatant and noncombatant. “It raises the possibility of catastrophic success.”¹⁴ Failure to act decisively can, and has had, quite an opposite effect.

In 1994, world leaders were apprised of an impending massacre, a genocide, in the West African state of Rwanda. Despite specific advance warning from UN troops on the ground in Rwanda, some 800,000 Tutsis were killed in approximately 100 days by a rival tribe, the Hutus. The killings, mostly by machete, reached 10,000 a day while the UN and others debated their response. A rapid international involvement in Rwanda, possibly a preventive one before the killings started in earnest, could have saved literally hundreds of thousands of lives.¹⁵

Further, the consequences of rapid and decisive military action are not bound to the battlefield alone—there can be significant indirect effects as well. Richard B. Frank, in his scholarly 1999 work, *Downfall*, provides ample example. In August 1945, the US used two atomic weapons to bring the war with Japan to a close “a year sooner” than expected by President Truman.¹⁶ The planned November 1945 (Operation Olympic) and March 1946 (Operation Coronet) invasions of the Japanese home islands became irrelevant and, in a direct sense, hundreds of thousands of combat casualties on just the American side were avoided.¹⁷ Indirectly, the August bombs also stopped the planned attacks on Japan’s internal food distribution system (maritime and rail), which, combined with the poor harvest of that season, could have resulted in up to 10 million dead from starvation in the winter of 1945-1946. Additionally, some 250,000 Asians on the mainland were dying monthly under Japanese rule, again most from starvation. The decision to end the war as rapidly as possible saved millions of lives.

More currently, a “steady” approach to Baghdad in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom that meticulously cleared and secured routes and garrisons along the way would have given Saddam’s forces enormous opportunity to adapt their defenses and strengthen their resistance.¹⁸ It was the pace of the attack from all quadrants that confused the enemy and saved lives—coalition and enemy, combatant and noncombatant. “Time” is more than an unrecoverable asset. Time lost in generating a coalition, or time lost in getting the appropriate response into contact with the problem, relates directly to lives lost. Speed is life.¹⁹

¹⁴ Marine General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as quoted by Fred Barnes, “The Commander—How Tommy Franks won the Iraq War,” *Weekly Standard*; 2 June 2003.

¹⁵ Steve Bradshaw and Ben Loeterman, full text at www.pbs.org.

¹⁶ President Truman letter as quoted by Richard B. Frank, *Downfall*, p. 243.

¹⁷ US casualties have been estimated as high as one million.

¹⁸ “Iraq’s Swift Defeat Blamed On Leaders—Missteps and erratic orders by Hussein and his son Qusai hastened the collapse. . .” David Zucchino, *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 2003.

¹⁹ Reference Liberia: “Kofi Annan, the UN secretary general, pleaded for the United States to intercede in Liberia ‘before it is too late’ and the best opportunity vanishes. ‘I think we can really salvage the situation

Given that our current political environment favors temporary associations and token commitments, one could logically anticipate small, “clean” engagements followed by rapid transitions to some approved follow-on status or condition where US roles would be minimal. Unfortunately, none of these visions are real. In Iraq, for example, administration officials conceded that

“In addition to believing that Iraqi soldiers and police officers would help secure the country, they thought that Iraqis would embrace the US invaders and a future marked by representative government, civil liberties and a free-market economy, and that Iraqi bureaucrats, minus a top layer of Baath Party figures would stay on the job. Within weeks, if all went well, Iraqis would begin taking control of their own affairs and the exit of US troops would be well underway.”²⁰

The same officials are now speaking in terms of months and years.

The problems start in planning²¹ where, using the description of interests above, states are reticent to commit even to planning military options before they have determined that no other combination of events, diplomacy, or economic leverage can produce an end-state adequate to fulfill their own national interest.²² These delays can cause planners to defer potential assets and result in “loose-fit” plans that must be either all embracing or wildly flexible. During Desert Shield, B-52’s could not be based in Saudi Arabia or Spain²³ but this condition changed once Desert Storm commenced. On the other hand, Turkey never consented to basing/pass through of the 4th Infantry Division in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although this was celebrated as a “diversion” that confused the Iraqis, the best-equipped “heavy” unit in the Army did not get to the fighting until after other units were in Baghdad. In each case, significant forces were withheld from planners and commanders in critical opening engagements.

Further, the idea that a single, universally accepted end-state or political objective exists for every discrete event is also patently false—there is no perfect solution. Each country molds its own national interests and culture into expectations for the post-conflict status quo, and weighs the value of that end state against the national resources required

if troops were to be deployed urgently and promptly,’ said Mr. Annan. . .” Christopher Marquis, “US Resists Entreaties To Send Peacekeepers To Liberia,” *New York Times*, July 22, 2003.

²⁰ Peter Slevin and Dana Priest, “Wolfowitz Concedes Errors On Iraq—Key Assumptions On Postwar Plans Were Incorrect,” *Washington Post*, July 24, 2003.

²¹ “Interviews with more than 30 current and former US officials, analysts, Iraqi-Americans and others — including a cross-section of those involved in the planning process — identified a number of pre-war decisions that they say helped create the current situation. Hasty planning, rosy assumptions about Iraqi attitudes and a failure to foresee and forestall the disastrous effects of looting and sabotage all contributed.” Barbara Slavin and Dave Moniz, “How Peace In Iraq Became So Elusive,” *USA Today*, July 22, 2003.

²² In a recent international conference, the phrase “deliberate planning” was excised from a draft document because the term inferred to some attendees that a political commitment had been made; i.e., countries involved in deliberate planning are committed to executing the plan. MNF SOP Workshop, 15-20 June 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii.

²³ B-52’s were included in day one missions but with longer flight times and fewer sorties per aircraft than closer basing would have allowed (e.g., Barksdale AFB sorties were in excess of 30 hours).

to achieve it. But coalitions form based on “common” goals or understandings for the area in question and the degree to which each country’s expectations are included in that common goal is generally reflected in the amount and style of resources it has committed. That could be some tangible asset like an engineering battalion or something more abstract like national image or prestige, but once committed to the partnership, each state has a stake in the outcome.

Compromise becomes the normal state of affairs in every coalition and the issues can vary from chain of command in combat units to who sits where at a table.²⁴ Diplomacy, underwritten by negotiation, is the basic insurance that every nation employs to protect its interests. Sometimes, this process can be frustrating and time-consuming to a fault, but in general, it correctly portrays the degree to which a nation wants to be involved. Slow laborious “talks”²⁵ simply represent a prudent caution when national interests are unclear²⁶ or potential costs are high in relationship to achieving the desired end state.²⁷ Even so, as states debate how individual interests and commitments are to be fulfilled, military planners will be expected to construct options for achieving that success.

A recognized threat to sovereignty is generally met with an open purse. Options are limited only by absolute values (if we own 200 serviceable airlifters, you get 200 allocated to your support). However, competing issues forever surround an event of “limited interest” and the national and international debates on the relative merits of one alternative over another are rarely complete. Somewhat perversely, as vague relationships and soft interests coalesce into coalition partnerships, the demand for explicit association between resources-allocated and results-expected seems to increase.²⁸ It is almost as if the lesser a country’s “interest” in an end state or outcome, the more exacting its demands become for accountability of its resources. Within the 70-plus-member Operation

²⁴ For example, “Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday that his country has accepted ‘in principle’ a US request to send thousands of troops, but first he wants to see a larger role for other Muslim countries or the United Nations in Iraq.” Thomas E. Ricks and Peter Slevin, “Stabilizing Iraq Will Be Difficult, General Testifies,” *Washington Post*, June 26, 2003, p. 16.

²⁵ “Three weeks after signaling it might send American troops to Liberia as part of an international peacekeeping operation, the Bush administration today disputed any suggestion that it was deliberately delaying a decision Planning assumes that Mr. Taylor will make good on his promises to step down and leave the country, and that the American presence will be phased out quickly and replaced by United Nations peacekeeping forces from other nations.” Richard W. Stevenson and Christopher Marquis, “Bush Team Faces Widespread Pressure To Act On Liberia,” *New York Times*, July 23, 2003.

²⁶ “In Liberia if you ask the question, ‘What is our strategic, vital interest?’ it will be hard to define it that way,” said Secretary Powell. Nicholas Kralev, “Powell Says US Should Not ‘Look Away’ From Liberian Plight,” *Washington Times*, July 23, 2003.

²⁷ Reference Liberia: “Were American forces to be sent, their job would be keeping the peace between government thugs and rebel criminals. But there is no peace to keep. Those are two powerful reasons against intervention. A third, overarching reason is the absence of US national interest.” Editorial, “Quicksand In Liberia,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 22, 2003.

²⁸ Reference Liberia: “The US does have an important role to play, but only if we get the kind of information and clarity that we need to take effective action. . . . Will US participation and leadership overstretch our resources? What are the costs? What commitments are we making? What is our exit, strategy? and, What are our plans for the coordination of long-term stabilization efforts?” Russ Feingold, US Senator, Wisconsin, “Bush Is Right To Consider Action,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, July 20, 2003.

Enduring Freedom coalition, or the 40-plus-member Operation Iraqi Freedom coalition, demand for “convincing” detail can be overwhelming. This acute pressure and its potential consequences make the coalition relationships even less stable. Planners must have a ready cache of alternatives for every phase of the operation.

Given that any US-involved coalition will have overwhelming force as an option for warfighting, the tougher questions may lie in assessing and planning for the needs of the area once the majority of unit-level fighting is done. Planning for transition to the post-conflict end-state has been generally underemphasized in the US and has, accordingly, received insufficient resources and attention. The chaotic transition in Iraq at this time (mid-2003) is seemingly such an example where, “in contrast to the planning for war, attention to the occupation was haphazard and incomplete.”²⁹ This has prompted others to say that “the treacherous job of restoring peace to Iraq is making war itself look like the easier task.”³⁰ Even now, values and interests of coalition partners and potential partners continue to evolve.

Several countries that declined to join for the original fight are now engaging or seriously considering partnership³¹ in the transition to peace. The reasons are varied. Some countries are constitutionally or morally opposed to war but willing participants in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations even if that entails combat and casualties.³² Some who may have opposed the war in Iraq as premature now see it as a fait accompli and have joined the coalition to help manage the transition or to secure better leverage in achieving their own national interests (such as oil exploration opportunities or reconstruction contracts).³³ Some simply see it as an opportunity to be counted when the US asked for help.³⁴ Regardless of the rationales, coalition objectives and membership can be in a constant state of flux from pre-conflict to the point at which

²⁹ Peter Slevin and Dana Priest, “Wolfowitz Concedes Errors On Iraq—Key assumptions On Postwar Plans Were Incorrect,” *Washington Post*, July 24, 2003. See also, “Lugar Says Postwar Planning Is Flawed—Iraq assumptions were inadequate,” Associated Press, *Washington Times*, August 11, 2003.

³⁰ Editorial, *USA Today*; “Mounting Casualties Expose Lack Of Post-War Plans,” 26 June 2003.

³¹ “Despite bruising disagreements with the United States over the war in Iraq, Europe is tentatively offering to help pay for reconstruction, provided that the money is administered by an international agency like the World Bank or the United Nations. . . . Whatever the differences we had on the war itself, we all have a stake in a stable and prosperous and open Iraq,’ according to Christopher Patten, the European Union commissioner for external relations.” Christopher Marquis, “Europe Weighs Helping Out In Iraq, But Under Its Own Terms,” *New York Times*, 16 July 2003.

³² Germany and Japan for example. “Japan’s Constitution, adopted under American military occupation, bans the use of force in settling international disputes.” James Brooke, “Japan Courts A Public Wary Of Sending Its Troops To Iraq,” *New York Times*, July 27, 2003.

³³ “Welcome The Pierres-Come-Lately,” Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, August 17, 2003.

³⁴ “Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, Ukraine and other countries have agreed to send troops, said General Abizaid,” Thomas E. Ricks and Peter Slevin, “Stabilizing Iraq Will Be Difficult, General Testifies,” *Washington Post*, June 26, 2003. See also, “Next month, the main body of a force commanded by Poles and comprising Spaniards, Ukrainians, Bulgarians and others from 22 countries arrives to keep the peace in a swath of central Iraq.” These are America’s “new” allies. Marc Champion, “‘New’ Allies Struggle To Fill Role. . .” *Wall Street Journal*, July 28, 2003.

the coalition's business is complete and they are dissolved as a political entity.³⁵ Fluid partnerships, shifting priorities, vague relationships and ambiguous metrics are simply a normal part of the landscape of coalitions and low-end conflicts. Lacking some overarching and solidifying threat to sovereignty, the situation as a whole can truthfully be described as decidedly unstable. These are not foundations with which the military is traditionally comfortable.

Planning for coalitions requires something more than adding an extra seat at the table and an extra adjective to the name of the task force. Plans *and* organizations must fully accommodate each country's interests as well as the unpredictability of the commitments. Additionally, even if the coalition remains intact throughout the engagement, each country may have distinct sets of metrics or thresholds beyond which it will not proceed. NATO's first serious military experience outside of its original charter of defense against the Soviet Bloc illustrated the difficulties of partnership inherent in a limited war with limited objectives. In Operation Allied Force, individual targets had to be vetted against the specific requirements of every member state or, frequently, personally approved by its head of state.³⁶ This was in NATO, an alliance with five decades of experience and collaboration in military means. But because there was no legitimate threat to the sovereignty of the alliance members, the alliance acted as would a coalition—with each state repetitively weighing internal preferences and goals against the value of the desired end state. Despite the alliance's professed "single" chain of command, this internal lack of harmony in action became publicly exposed with repeated use of the "red card" or veto by NATO member states during the target approval process.³⁷ This sort of "hands-on" political guidance during NATO's 40-year watch on the Fulda Gap would have been unthinkable, but in today's environment, it is absolutely the norm.

It is imperative, then, to understand that no country will ever fully release its military to another country—there will always be parallel chains of command, one in the multinational hierarchy and one within national command elements. US doctrine should recognize and accept this fact and ensure that organizational templates are suitably adjusted to both incorporate this duality and to use it to increase efficiency of the coalition. Every engagement may in fact result in some unique construct. During Desert Storm, there were actually separate "chains of command" with American and Saudi generals as co-commanders within the allied coalition. The coalition "worked" because of leadership, focused objectives, and the presence of a high threat (to Kuwaiti and Saudi sovereignty) that trumped much of the individual country priority lists.

There was, at least publicly, a greater cohesion within this "coalition" with its narrowly defined mission of ejecting the Iraqi army from Kuwait than within the NATO

³⁵ Tom Squitieri, "Relief For US Troops Lacking-Allies pledge less help in Iraq than expected," *USA Today*, 30 May 2003.

³⁶ *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat*, by General Wesley Clark.

³⁷ "General Short was very blunt and very candid about the French, by name. He said that they played the red card a number of times and . . ." from a reporter's question to Kenneth H. Bacon, ASD PA DOD News Briefing, Thursday, October 21, 1999.

“alliance” for it’s broadly waved “doing the right thing in the Balkans” mission. Organizing to fight with such arrangements cannot be the best choice from a military perspective if any alternative exists.³⁸ But, barring some very unique events, the US threshold for purely unilateral action is so high as to be prohibitive, i.e., no alternative does exist. And, from a political perspective, coalitions are the best option.

Coalition warfare has many advantages, the principal of which may be “legitimacy,” both internally and externally. Domestically, the coalition provides the administration, including the military, with very powerful leverage in every forum. Internal disagreements, micromanagement from inside and outside agencies, and political dissent to a certain degree must be measured in effect not only in relation to the current US administration but also against the needs of the coalition members and the American image portrayed to those members. While this will never trump a legitimate and critical discourse concerning the course of action undertaken, it assists in avoiding trivial or unrelated obstacles thrown down by those with other agendas or priorities.

Externally, with the exception of “self-defense,” almost every country looks for some international approval, formal or informal, that grants moral sanction to its initiation of hostilities as well as its post-intervention end-state. NATO consensus, UN mandates,³⁹ and the formation of significant coalitions are examples of the political engines that provide the necessary momentum for the declaration of a “just” cause.⁴⁰ Though every state determines the validity of its own choices to a certain extent, the situation in Iraq underscores this connection between specific national interest and commitment. “There are many countries inclined to help. However, they won’t commit themselves without the political cover that explicit authorization by the United Nations would provide.”⁴¹

With the potential for dozens of partners (and divergent “interests”) in any coalition,⁴² the planning details of who, what, when, where and how to engage can easily become a derivative of various memorandums of understanding, legal accords, collaboratively constructed rules of engagement, costs, reimbursements, leadership choices, regional access, diverse end-state designs and so forth. Even for the US with its “superpower status,” virtually every international understanding, accord or other appearance of harmony is intensely negotiated or contrived as consensual. Each country has its own domestic pressure and national interest in mind during these negotiations.⁴³ For example,

³⁸ “Despite years of multinational, cooperative planning within the Alliance, the allies found it difficult to agree on a common approach. The consensus for action was fragile in the absence of an immediate threat to allied territory or traditional interests.” RAND Research Brief, “Operation Allied Force,” Published 2001

³⁹ For example, the press release, including discussion in the Security Council, on UN Security Council Resolution 1483 (22/05/2003) is shown at www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/sc7765.doc.htm.

⁴⁰ Elaine Sciolino, “France Declines US Call For Iraq Force,” *New York Times*, 16 July 2003.

⁴¹ Editorial, “Let’s Ask For Help,” *Dallas Morning News*, July 22, 2003.

⁴² Over 70 countries are involved in Afghanistan (<http://www.centcom.mil/Operations/Coalition/joint.htm>) and more than 40 in Iraq. A “snapshot” of participating states is shown in annex B.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030327-10.html>.

⁴³ “Portuguese officials confirmed that they would send just 120 paramilitary police, not regular soldiers. Portuguese officials said they would consider sending military troops if the United Nations or NATO

despite “considerable US pressure to do so,” India has chosen not to send peacekeeping troops to Iraq largely because of domestic reaction and their current relationship with Pakistan.⁴⁴ At a more tactical level, exempting coalition forces from selected host country laws or customs is obviously unpopular in most countries and perhaps even more so in certain Sharia Law states. But the opposite is true as well. Mandating strict compliance with Sharia Law would incur an overwhelmingly negative reaction from many participating states, particularly those that are secular or non-Muslim. That stipulation alone might decimate the coalition. The compromise ultimately achieved must show respect for the interests of all participants.

In other circumstances, Country X with its very important vote in the North Atlantic Council (or the UN Security Council, etc.) may want its military to play a particular or “prestigious” role. Securing such a vote or other commitment to obligate resources may take precedence over some military efficiency. Regarding Operation Iraqi Freedom, Turkish officials “warned that lawmakers in parliament would balk if the troop request was not tied to a specific and deep role for Turkey in Iraq’s reconstruction. ‘If it is seen that we just send a police force there, then the vote will be different,’ adding that Turkey must be ‘part of the big picture’.”⁴⁵ Coordination and diplomacy are the mandatory foundations for military success in today’s politically charged climate and compromise may be the key to securing those foundations. Again, for many traditional thinkers in the military, ambiguity and compromise are not comfortable concepts.⁴⁶

authorized a force.” “Allies Balk At Sending Troops As US soldiers leave Iraq, replacements slow to come,” Tom Squitieri and Dave Moniz, *USA Today*, 10 July 2003.

⁴⁴ “It is a decision that each country needs to make on its own, depending on its interests and its concerns about the situation in Iraq.” State Department spokesman, Richard A. Boucher as quoted by John Kifner, “India Decides Not To Send Troops To Iraq Now,” *New York Times*, 15 July 2003.

⁴⁵ Glenn Kessler, “Turkish Official Ties Iraq Aid To Economic Pledges,” *Washington Post*, July 24, 2003.

⁴⁶ Words like “compromise” and “adequate” tend to be falsely related to “failure to achieve potential.” It is simply the culture of those who strive to be the “best.” In this day, however, a compromise that enables an adequate solution or end state is a win.

Section 2

Putting the Solution in Contact with the Problem

In war it is not always possible to have everything go exactly as one likes. In working with allies, it sometimes happens they develop opinions of their own.

Winston Churchill (1874 – 1965)

Prior relationships, uneven priorities, unbalanced capabilities and resources, and the uniqueness of each circumstance will govern the pace of the negotiations leading to the formation of a coalition and its stated goals. These same forms of imbalance among opposing military forces might result in some fashion of asymmetric warfare; among allies, it is the basis of asymmetric commitments and reflects higher risk in the solidarity of the coalition. Each prospective participant establishes the extent of its interest in the outcome through iterative engagements with its international and domestic constituencies.¹ Thus, the value of the “mission” to individual states in terms of merit, risk and cost will ultimately determine both the make-up of the coalition and the desired end state. These several factors can certainly be constrained in effect by a catastrophic event (i.e., a unique local circumstance) that focuses the effort and streamlines response times. But, in general, time will be a significant factor in generating a coalition because negotiation and other forms of diplomacy are, by their very nature, gradual affairs producing graduated consequences. The challenge, then, is really about speed, or “time lost” if you prefer. As the following chart suggests, an opportunity exists to reduce the gap in time between recognition of a requirement and a coalition response that puts a solution in contact with the problem. This “execution gap” is simply “time-lost” and translates directly to fewer options for commanders and lives lost on the ground.

¹ Christopher Marquis, “Europe Weighs Helping Out In Iraq, But Under Its Own Terms,” *New York Times*, 16 July 2003.

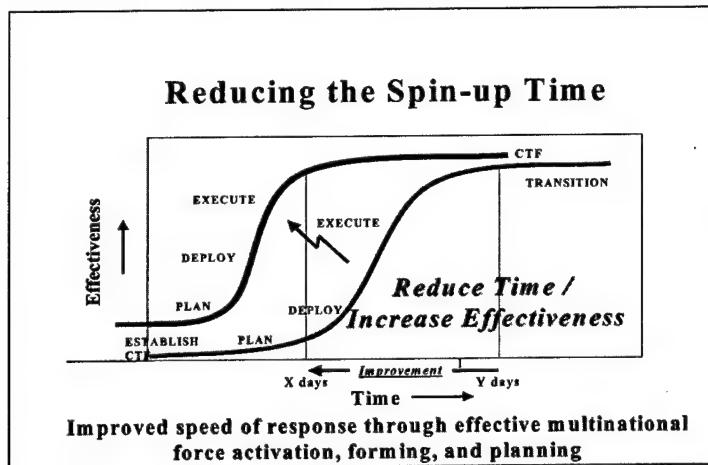


Figure 1. Selection, training, standardization and equipping are common time consumers in organizing an ad hoc response. Agreement in advance for routine requirements could save lives.²

However, planning or “pre-planning” without knowledge of the specific mission or the participants can be a daunting task. Failing to plan, though, accepts the probability of avoidable delay and its direct consequence—lives lost. The US Pacific Command, in partnership with over 30 countries and organizations, has accepted this responsibility head-on and has initiated a process of collaboration on “future” coalitions and how these entities might work together to reduce spin-up time and other inefficiencies. The Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) is “*a cadre of military planners* from nations with Asia-Pacific interests capable of *rapidly augmenting* a multinational force (MNF)³ headquarters established to plan and execute multinational coalition operations in response to Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)/Small Scale Contingencies (SSC).”⁴ Since 2001, these 30-plus countries have been willing to collaborate in this non-treaty, non-prescriptive, non-binding endeavor.⁵ The most visible product of this cooperation is the Multinational Force Standing Operating Procedure (MNF SOP) found on the Internet.⁶ It runs to about 1000 pages at this time and is constructed in segments by consensus-only agreement. It is neither “approved” by any government nor owned in any sense that controls its use or non-use—it sits as an open source on the Internet. Its intent, however, is clear—to reduce time lost in any future

² Adapted from “What is MPAT?” MNF SOP Workshop presentation, 15-20 June 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii.

³ There is a MPAT initiative to differentiate “coalition” from “combined,” where “combined” would reflect treaty or alliance enabled efforts and “coalition” would reflect purely ad hoc groups. However, in this paper, “multinational force,” “combined force” and “coalition force” are used interchangeably.

⁴ Emphasis in original. From online briefing: “What is MPAT?” http://www2.apan-info.net/mpat/main-files/What%20is%20MPAT_files/frame.htm.

⁵ Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Canada, China, France, Fiji, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Solomon Is., Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, Vietnam, UK and US.

⁶ <http://www2.apan-info.net/mnfsop/>.

(coalition) endeavor by organizing, equipping⁷ and training task force personnel and to improve efficiency once the Coalition Task Force (CTF)⁸ is underway. The difficulty lies in finding a sort of universally applicable framework that relates to the potential military missions without inferring some prior diplomatic control of options, especially a perception of control by the US. In some ways, this is similar to a new student looking for a college course on "how to study." It may not count like a regular math or history class, but it gives a solid starting point for all of the "real" college courses to come and thus reduces the transition time from high school and improves performance overall.

In a similar fashion, the MPAT "operational start points" shown in the MNF SOP provide a studied framework for future coalition efforts. These five agreed upon elements reflect both the difficulty of this task and the innovation of the organizers: Common planning and decision process, Clear understanding and clarity of terminology, Lead nation concept, Common command relationships and/or common control-coordination concepts, and a Standardized CTF Headquarters Organization. Each start point represents a communally accepted guideline or principle for effective and efficient military operations. This is just the beginning, however. It is relatively easy to agree that a common planning process is "good" but MPAT facilitators are reticent to put "finish" dates on this work because so much depends on finding truly common ground among participants. The five points are largely self-explanatory and there is a complementary nature to each within the set. "Common planning and decision process," for example, matches nicely with "standard organization." The "nuisance," of course, is in the detail. Doctrinal differences, history, habit and culture all form substantial obstacles to the rapid documentation of these essentials. Progress to date, however, has been considerable.

During the summer 2003 MPAT workshop, it was not uncommon to discover differences. Certainly this was predictable. Several times, however, what appeared to be a serious "doctrinal" difference was resolved quickly as a problem in interpretation. This is not overly surprising since the MPAT participants were impressively qualified to address the issues and a unity of effort plainly pervaded the conference. Moreover, there are only so many "best practices" to be adopted for a given task and it can be expected that most competent militaries would come up with similar solutions. "Semantics" did, however, lead to many interesting discussions, marked at times by a pointed humor.⁹ The results of these encounters were routinely both a sense of bonding and an improved MNF SOP. The sense of collaboration and cooperation generated by these open conferences are, in some measures, the most important outcomes of the forum. As was the case in Desert Storm and more recent engagements, coalition leaders who had common experiences or even common classes, found that relationships were rapidly renewed or created and that the resulting trust was a great advantage of the coalition.¹⁰ It may well be that the "grail" we seek is in the MPAT process rather than in a written product. This is seconded, in effect,

⁷ Pertaining for the most part to common or interoperable information systems at this time.

⁸ Also Combined Task Force; see footnote 49.

⁹ "Your English is very good; is it really your second language?" "No, English is my fourth language." MNF SOP Workshop, 15-20 June 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii.

¹⁰ General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and Peter Petre, *It Doesn't Take a Hero*, New York: Bantam, 1992.

by interviews at US Central Command's CCC wherein action officers stated that the number one problem during their initial tour spin-up period was "establishing confidence with co-workers." Lacking a common experience or other prior connection created the necessity for a "start from scratch" relationship. Conversely, the "best" factors for the CCC action officers came later in the job and related to the satisfaction of solving problems with those same co-workers, especially coalition members. So, at least in this perspective, it is only a matter of time from worse to best. Unfortunately, time is a critical element.

In other MPAT discussions, the term "Area of Responsibility" (AOR) was deemed to be appropriate perhaps in a formal alliance with detailed de-conflictions and formal accountabilities by zone but found to be somewhat arrogant and condescending among a partnership of sovereign states, especially when it is still a *potential* coalition. "Area of Operations" (AO) was offered as a substitute with unanimous consent. Similarly, several states and international organizations were uncomfortable with terms like "battle" and "warrior" which are sprinkled liberally throughout US doctrine and rhetoric these days. Especially for international organizations focused on a scheme of feeding people, administering vaccines, or establishing an elected government, "warrior-speak," in terms like "battlespace"¹¹ and "battle rhythm,"¹² makes no productive contribution to their mission. Realistically, looking or sounding like the military may in many cases be counterproductive to their systems of contacts and safe passages.

If, as it appears today, *major* combat is to become the lesser challenge in each new engagement, planning documents and doctrine must be transformed. In doing so, US doctrine must be inclusive of the non-traditional elements that will complete the tough transition from conflict to desired end state. This means that concepts with supporting terms like "Senior Military Representative" or even "Senior National Representative" must give way to organization- and state-neutral terminology. For this illustration, "Senior Representative" would include the minimum necessary distinctions without truncating membership at traditional boundaries. In the future (and including Iraq today) US doctrine, in order to maintain its relevancy, must be prepared to deal with organizations, agencies, and institutions that lie outside of the traditional nation-state relationships.¹³ This does not preclude organization and/or coordination within the various sub-elements of a represented group (e.g., a meeting of all the Senior Military

¹¹ The environment, factors, and conditions that must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission. This includes the air, land, sea, space, and the included enemy and friendly forces; facilities; weather; terrain; the electromagnetic spectrum; and the information environment within the operational areas and areas of interest. See also electromagnetic spectrum; information environment; joint intelligence preparation of the battlespace, *DOD Dictionary*.

¹² "What is this 'battle rhythm'?" asked one international officer. An American replied with an elaborate explanation, including graphics, of the interrelationship of staff responses, lead-times and milestones that were required to meet the commander's daily need for specific information. Response? "Then I suggest we call it the 'staff schedule.' MNF SOP Workshop, 15-20 June 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii.

¹³ There are numerous Non-Governmental/International Organizations that can and will help with medical supplies and treatment, food supplies and distribution, internally displaced persons, refugees, reestablishment of infrastructure and institutions, human rights and election monitoring, training and education and so forth.

Representatives). But it should preclude the arbitrary assignment of the military at the top of each organizational pyramid.

Additionally, US doctrine should recognize and accept the primacy of coalitions (over alliances) as the most probable paradigm within which the US may participate. American participation may come at many levels including, where negotiated and appropriate to US interests, “lead-nation” status. But regardless of the predominantly political value of alliances, there are few illustrations to be found today or in the near future where a “members-only” alliance would act without the cooperation of other states and organizations or under the aegis of the UN. By definition, that makes it a coalition. There is a similar logic with the use of “joint.” US forces, other than in garrison or in training, will rarely operate in any non-coalition, much less, non-joint operation. US doctrine should reflect the predominant environment.

Even with all the cooperation within MPAT, the path to the first 1000 pages may have been the uncomplicated part. Most discussions were much more than a debate with dictionaries. They reflected genuine differences regarding motives, methods and metrics. “You don’t understand,” became the lead-in for sincere discussions, heartfelt rationales, thorough explications, and periodically, a bit of very diplomatic finger pointing. The general charge was that Americans tend to, as is natural, see events from a US perspective. The problem is in the aftermath of such a survey or view where American dominance in virtually all international measures tends to frame this US perspective as some sort of universal truth. Often, the resulting misperceptions of the task or enemy are surprises only to the US. While not an absolute, many international officers offered that the American penchant for underrating (or overrating) its opponents has its origins in a failure to recognize cultural and social imperatives that affected their assumptions. This has contributed to decades of unsatisfactory or very compromised end states.

Cultural awareness or “sensitivity” is not simply a case of generic training on crossing your legs or touching someone with your left hand. The conventional “last minute” briefing on culture and geography is not sufficient.¹⁴ It requires legitimate area study with expert advice on culture, custom, tradition, and religion and the unique complications that make each circumstance distinct. These sorts of information may or may not contribute to “winning the fight” in the traditional sense, but training to use these data will almost certainly contribute to understanding how to fashion the peace.

In Liberia, a reporter was interviewing “a friendly and well-spoken rebel fighter, formerly a mechanic in the army, who wore grubby jeans and a pageboy wig held in place with a smart black hair band. When asked why, he politely ended the interview. Liberian civilians and others explained that by altering their

¹⁴ A one-hour presentation for 82d Airborne troops deploying to Iraq in Sep 2003 was “good” but little more than a survey of cultural items. An 82d spokesman said the troops would “probably” get additional training once deployed. Jay Price, “Just Returned Troops Ready For New Mission In Iraq,” *Raleigh (NC) News & Observer*, August 25, 2003.

appearance, fighters signal that they are no longer themselves. ‘They have gone to the spirit world,’ said one.”¹⁵

This is not a concept with which American planners are comfortable.¹⁶ No amount of “thinking outside the box” is going to prepare Americans uneducated in the specifics of this region to expect this or to anticipate its consequences. Would this individual be yet another person if outfitted as a police officer or enrolled in a new Liberian army with a distinctive beret? What are the consequences of a screening process if a change in appearance can change the person being interviewed?

The remedy for this sort of ethno-centrism, or perpetual Americanism, is not a simple one because understanding cultural and social imperatives is as much an intuitive task as a rational one. In fact, it is more so since “rationalism” and “the scientific approach” are very much American cultural stakes, especially for the military. It may be that all of this logic is part of the problem. Despite its social and ethnic diversity, the US remains in cultural isolation from large blocks of the world.

At a broad level, joint doctrine recognizes four elements of national power: the Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME) dimensions. These perspectives, or filters for assessing a nation’s strengths and unique characteristics, provide planners with a framework for understanding enemy and friend alike but DIME cannot produce an all-inclusive analysis. Unrecognized cultural and social indicators, once missed intuitively, avoid mechanical doctrinal scrutiny since they do not fit nicely into that with which we are familiar and well equipped to consider.¹⁷ Since the false impressions tend to reflect degrees (or absence) of understanding regarding social and cultural value, international officers, particularly the Asians present at the MPAT conference, recommended inclusion of a fifth element of national power—Socio-Cultural strength.¹⁸

As a blunt illustration of this point, dozens upon dozens of attacks against American soldiers in Iraq occurred well after the Iraqi military structure had collapsed.¹⁹

In (the city) Fallujah, “the prevailing view among US commanders was that the attacks were being conducted almost exclusively by Hussein loyalists who had the support of other residents. Over time, the brigade’s officers came to realize that Fallujah was more traditional than Baathist. Much of the animosity toward US forces was driven by perceived slights of tribal and religious traditions.”²⁰

¹⁵ “Old Foes Embrace New Liberian Truce. . .” Karl Vick, *Washington Post*, August 6, 2003.

¹⁶ In a separate report: “Fighters in Liberia sometimes wear wigs or women’s clothes to intimidate their enemies and gain what many believe is magical protection from bullets.” Edward Harris, “Troops Move To Secure Monrovia. . .” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 20, 2003.

¹⁷ US Special Operations Command is a notable exception to this assertion.

¹⁸ “DIMES,” MNF SOP Workshop, 15-20 June 2003, Honolulu, Hawaii.

¹⁹ There have been multiple “phases” where attacks came from different groups and for different reasons including “outsider” terrorist organizations.

²⁰ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, “In Iraqi City, A New Battle Plan. . . Adapting to Local Culture,” *Washington Post*, July 29, 2003.

("Slights," in this report, is somewhat understated as the professed transgressions ranged from entering without knocking to searching clerics and women to killing relatives caught in crossfire.) Considered generally as insults to the family, tradition requires atonement by the aggressor or avengement by the family. "This is a tribal, traditional society, where the principles of *tha'r* (revenge) and *fidya* (blood money) are still in force. Tribal custom demands that for every man killed, four men from the enemy tribe must die, or one man if it was an accidental death. But a vendetta can be avoided through financial compensation."²¹ The largely successful remedy lay in reparations (in the range of \$500 - \$2500) handled through the local mayor's office and in-person apologies from Americans. In general, this combination met the Iraqi "metric" for resolving the slight and relieved relatives of their obligation to avenge the offended. Hostility to Americans in Fallujah was not eliminated but was substantially and noticeably reduced.²² These sorts of insights, specific to unique local circumstances, are not obvious for the uninitiated.

Another shortfall in our understanding became apparent as the actual fighting and initial "police work" resulted in success after success in capturing or displacing the senior Iraqi leadership. According to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, the US had wrongly assumed that it could "cut off the head" of the Iraqi government but allow the various bureaucracies to continue functioning. Instead, entire ministries collapsed. The degree to which this brutal administration had centralized control had been vastly underestimated. The US also failed to recognize that there would be a strong nationalist influence violently opposed to US interference in Iraq regardless of their feelings on Saddam's reign. These factors further undermined assumptions about defections of individuals as well as entire units that had been expected to change sides.²³

In the past, commanders have often relied on unique, and at times, coincidental relationships or individual backgrounds to add a cultural depth to assessments and planning. Linguists and interpreters have become de facto "cultural advisors" for example. Despite good intentions, these exceptional capabilities, where they exist, have not completely penetrated the staffs and operational forces. Absent sweeping opportunities for immersion in multiple cultures, joint doctrine should be changed to include socio-cultural strength as the fifth element of national power and thus provide a starting point for relevant education and analysis. The combination of Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic and *Socio-cultural* (DIMES) dimensions would provide an institutional basis for success in this new arena by ensuring that relevant education and skills are abundant throughout the planning and combat elements of US forces. As a corollary to DIMES, joint doctrine should also encourage a willingness to consider unfamiliar cultures and, where sensible, the use of alternative methods to

²¹ Kim Ghattas, "Americans In Iraq Adopt Local Blood Money Custom," *London Financial Times*, August 6, 2003.

²² Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "In Iraqi City, A New Battle Plan... Adapting to Local Culture," *Washington Post*, July 29, 2003.

²³ Paul D. Wolfowitz as quoted in "A Gust Of Realism In Iraq," Editorial, *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 2003.

achieve US goals. The intent is to foster an attitude of inclusiveness, an openness to differences, that will better prepare Americans for the unexpected or unusual. DIMES will not provide all of the answers; it will, however, engage the strength of American adaptability in a new area.

Section 3

“Minding the Gap”

In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice—but in practice, there is.

Jan L.A. van de Snepscheut (1953 - 1994)

“Speed” alone may not be the all-encompassing solution for the “execution gap” but arriving late, uninformed, unorganized, and ill equipped promotes neither an early success nor engenders any new confidence in the operation. A sense of urgency and purpose is critical to sustaining any dynamic organization and the quicker a coalition establishes a positive momentum toward success, the smoother the approach will be. The divide, discussed earlier, between planning assumptions and fixed commitments can be a harsh lesson in world politics and priorities and virtually assures that no “off-the-shelf” plan can be employed without modification. Further, once underway, the complex nature of these endeavors will present innumerable “opportunities” to overcome fresh challenges and delays. These potential false starts and negative trends must be overcome at the onset. The “rich get richer” has a relevant opposite here—few countries will find a compelling reason to join a losing team. No head of state, no chief of an international organization, wants to explain failure to his or her constituencies. States are simply less likely to join a partnership that starts poorly or appears to be headed for failure.

This is particularly true in view of the “limited objectives” to be achieved. Absent the sovereignty issue, each new venture in this new world environment will compete continuously for resources from within its own organization or state and frequently in external competitions as well—e.g., should the US focus on Southwest Asia or Northeast Asia? Does peace in the Middle East have a higher priority than stability in West Africa? Are there gradations of commitment (resources) that could produce an acceptable success (i.e., end state) in some lesser form in each area? Even after the operation is started, the contest persists. Should the US continue in Afghanistan (and Iraq) or divert those funds for domestic budget issues like prescription drug offsets in Medicare? Accountability in this atmosphere of competing interests is rigorously appraised and reported and the media, abetted by special interest “leaks,” can appear to be everywhere, simultaneously. Regardless of the debates, and the intrigue of second choices, the ultimate triumphs of the coalition depend to a large degree on the perceptions of observers and participants that it

is winning the operation, however that is defined, and that it will be ultimately "victorious." Success breeds success.

This is the beginning of the JTF/CTF dilemma or labyrinth, as the case may turn out. After a national decision to accept a mission, the first priorities are establishing the responsible organization and its visible presence. Simply "getting people on board" becomes the driving objective, or as one interviewee stated, "I'll take anybody but I want them yesterday."¹ Every decision, however, becomes a tradeoff between options, a compromise between outcomes. Is it more important to get people into the mix rapidly or is it more important to analyze the mission to determine which people are necessary to have? The answers are important. An untailored force is inefficient and may in due course be ineffective as well. A force not in being is just that. In the early chaos of the new organization, the requests for information are endless and the need for "detail" grows in exponential fashion. Can a particular specialty be filled from any coalition source? Are US Army Special Forces the same as those from another country?² What is the matrix of available transportation and deployable logistics support? It would be nice (and less time consuming) if some of the "routine" in unforeseen events could be worked in advance. The "unforeseen" part is a problem, but there are solutions.

Both US Pacific Command, via its involvement with MPAT, and the US Central Command feel this need for speed. MPAT shortcuts the time required in a normal coordination process among its allied members by choosing a "lead nation" to provide the "preponderance" of key staff and equipment. US Central Command, in parallel fashion, has ensured its rapid response by assuming that the US would, in general, "lead" every endeavor in which the military was tasked. Thus MPAT's "lead nation" concept and Central Command's current combat operations look very similar in some respects though for different reasons and with ultimately different goals. As a consequence of each approach, JTF/CTF staffs are, in the main, constructed as if each effort were a single nation event.

For Central Command, other benefits accrue. By using an American-centric design, the positions and strengths required to support combat operations are also well known to the joint planners. In the critical spin-up period, Central Command can move to rapidly fill every key staff billet with an American. Controlled and tasked internally (by the Joint Staff), augmentees can flow rapidly to Tampa's organizations both stateside and abroad for their combat operations. Generally, allies are added into the equation as their commitments and capabilities are cemented into usable elements.

The result of "adding" allies to an extant US recipe for an operation, though, has some predictable outcomes. "Deconfliction" of allies becomes the norm even with usable

¹ Interview, US Central Command, June 2003.

² The correct answer is "You don't know." It takes 4-6 weeks for a US contingent to visit another country, make an evaluation and submit a report. It is likely that the offered team is good; it is unlikely that they are good at exactly the same tasks as their US counterparts. The key is finding a fit. Interview, US Central Command, June 2003.

elements on the table. There are notable exceptions³ but, of late, “integration” or “interdependence” has rarely been a coherent coalition option. The ad hoc nature of coalitions in combination with the necessity for prompt action reinforces the necessity of this US-only or MPAT “lead-nation” approach. From a staff and planning view, however, this has the unfortunate side effect of excluding potentially key allies from gaining either full participation or a complete understanding of the operation; thus, a tier system of allies within the coalition is born.

There are good and rational explanations for not including everyone in every briefing or decision. Some “participating nations” are there in name only and have no desire or need to be involved in day-to-day operational discussions. Some, unfortunately, send their representatives primarily to collect information on coalition operations or the allies therein. These data have sometimes reappeared as “information leaks” which have allegedly compromised an operation or unreasonably complicated negotiations. The reasons for such leaks are many as discussed before but “prior relationships” and “internal priorities” are the usual suspects. In the buildup to Operation Allied Force and five-months before the bombing campaign in Kosovo began, a French NATO officer was arrested for passing sensitive documents to Yugoslavia. Later, less than two weeks after the opening NATO attack sorties, the number of “critical” personnel with access to the daily air tasking order was suddenly reduced from 600 to 100 amidst allegations that classified information was again being passed to Yugoslavia. Various officials denounced this particular allegation but with large coalitions, and the attendant and unavoidable conflicts in national priorities, the potential for disaster is undeniable. NATO currently has 19 members and expansion is part of the system strategy.⁴

Even with the speedy arrival of key coalition staff, the time required to learn individual responsibilities, assess needs, become skilled at the myriad coordination interfaces and then construct an adequate response can result in an awkward and inefficient spin-up process.⁵ The solution may lie not in “planning” per se, but rather in “planning protocols.”⁶

“Planning protocol” is offered in lieu of “planning standards” because it avoids an inferred prescriptive formula for action. “Protocol” implies more of a draft, more of a “best practices” process than a formal and rigid “standard” for planning. It promotes, rather than allows, flexibility and adaptability within unique circumstances and the ubiquitous political reluctance to commit that comes with limited objectives. The differences in the proposed organizational schemes shown later may appear minor when compared the more formal “standards” approach but each conveys a mindset that rewards openness and collaboration. It is not dissimilar from the normal “branches and sequels”

³ United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for one; Commonwealth of Australia for another.

⁴ Seven new countries – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia – are expected to join NATO by May 2004. <http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.htm>.

⁵ The average spin-up time for newly assigned officers at Central Command’s CCC was 30 days by their own assessment. Per interviews with over 30 action officers, US Central Command, June 2003.

⁶ Protocol: forms of ceremony; the first copy of a state document or treaty; a preliminary record or draft of a transaction; a plan for a scientific experiment or treatment. Webster’s II, New Riverside Dictionary, 1984.

approach to planning except that the potential for diversion starts in the organization itself rather than in the operational tasks. The organization of now, and the future, cannot be the rigid foundation of days and alliances past.

The theory of rapid assembly and augmentation, however, meets with the reality of practice very quickly. US Central Command's Coalition Coordination Center (CCC) for Afghanistan in Tampa, Florida has about 40 positions with an approximately equal amount in the forward element (Friendly Forces Coordination Center or F2C2); the envisioned Standing Joint Forces Headquarters (SJFHQ) has approximately 60 positions. This roughly calls for 140 people without including the Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC), the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC), the Coalition Information Center (CIC) and other ancillary command, staff or control functions not routinely active during peacetime operations—per conflict or distinct region, per rotation. There simply are not hundreds of Americans pre-selected, pre-trained and uncommitted to other taskings that can be rapidly assembled to augment or stand up a coalition task force headquarters and all of the attendant elements. However, judging from the successes of the Central Command experience with its simultaneous 2½ wars,⁷ there should be caution and a prudent review before initiating significant change.

Alternatively, the MPAT concept fully concedes the value of experience and training and is constructed to moderate the sorts of initiation delays inherent in a new organization. Its approach to this personnel problem is to identify, in each participating nation, a cadre of trained, and exercised, action officers capable of assuming key staff positions in a CTF.⁸ The target commitment for retention of each individual is two years. This is a direct attack on the problem but will produce only a few people (relative to the number required) that may be available when the call comes. For starters, it assumes that all 30 states now exercising with MPAT will join an actual coalition in a timely manner in a real world event. Additionally, the total number available (assuming 2-5 per country) still falls short of the hundreds required to fully operate the CTF headquarters and all supporting subsets of the operation. This condition is exacerbated in a long-term commitment that requires rotation. The immediate fallback position is use of the MPAT “lead-nation” to “rapidly fill the preponderance” of staff positions. That concept is both practical and efficient but, when the dust clears, not much different from the US Central Command approach. The possibility for a substantive and positive change does exist, however, in the continuing expansion and use of the MNF SOP. There is one major obstacle and it appears to be a universal problem—classified data, sources and methods.

This paper will not take on the US policy governing the distribution and sharing of intelligence among allies. The results of these policies, however, have been clear. Information is routinely marked “NOFORN”⁹ at all levels and forwarded to US action officers working actively with allies in coalitions.¹⁰ It has been true in the war against

⁷ Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa.

⁸ Exercises not only validate the MNF SOP but also serve as a proxy for experience.

⁹ No foreign distribution authorized.

¹⁰ The US is not the only state with exclusive policies on distribution.

terrorism; it has been true in the “war” against drugs; it is still a problem. None of the possible outcomes are good. Allowing allies to engage the enemy without full knowledge is somewhat akin to aiding and abetting that enemy, but providing the information is illegal. The in-between gray zone of “workarounds” and “suggestions” to the coalition is a poor substitute for integrity in combat. The problem gets worse when you consider the myriad US agencies likely to be involved in new world challenges, each group with its own forms of restricted information and separate objectives. The MPAT ideal of a fully interdependent coalition staff is headed straight into this wall. The “lead-nation” concept is not only a speedy and effective start-up gambit; it is a clever postponement of the information-sharing quagmire that sits on the horizon.

In their current combat environment, the US Central Command uses at least three separate systems for information management. There is a US-only classified system, a coalition-only classified system for *each* of its coalitions (though many states are members of more than just one coalition), and an open or unclassified system. No significant change can be expected and the proposed coalition organizations reflect this dilemma.

Section 4

Sourcing the “Augmentees”

My grandfather once told me that there were two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was much less competition.

Indira Gandhi (1917 – 1984)

The first concern about sourcing augmentees for core staff and planning duties during combat operations is to determine whether these functions are truly additional obligations or whether the identical or nearly identical functions exist as core peacetime duties. “Downsizing” in the military over the last 10 to 15 years has largely consumed the excess in most staffs and critical peacetime requirements can rarely be waived. (For example, even in a theater of near constant combat, US Central Command is still producing budget inputs and forecasting various system upgrades.) If the new spaces are in fact wartime-only, the CCC for example, there can be little practical expectation for running a complex operation using only active duty personnel without significantly impacting their peacetime obligations. The “proof is in the pudding” so to speak. “Reservists” currently operate the CCC at very nearly 100%.¹ Although there were more active duty participants in the initial standup of the Center, the subsequent fills and replacements have almost always come from the reserve.

This makes training an interesting subject. Among the action officers, there were no “Joint Service Officers” (JSO) and exactly zero graduates from the Joint Forces Staff College.² Excepting those who completed extensive active duty time, the same could be said about most of the other “indicators” that might be imagined as good qualifiers for this type of duty: very little professional military education in residence, very few senior staff assignments, and very little recent duty in a joint or combined staff. The basic qualifications, however, were met: “good people, high energy.”³ Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines—all working together and getting the job done.

¹ June 2003.

² Predecessor organization was the “Armed Forces Staff College.”

³ Interview, US Central Command, June 2003.

According to those doing the work, the first requirement for an action officer at any desk in the CCC is to be competent in his or her own specialty; the second requirement is to have a personality that fits the organization's need for cooperation and information gathering. As is the case in almost every staff that relies heavily on individual expertise and collaborative efforts, "people skills" are very nearly as important as "answers." This is even more significant in multinational assignments because of the routine contact with international officers that each US action officer maintains. Largely by default, each action officer becomes a "snapshot" of America—a mini-ambassador representing our interests and our image. This is not a trite remark. Many of these officers will serve 12-month tours (or longer) as the day-to-day point of contact for coalition interaction at their level but there is no lead-in preparation required.

Absent a standardized pipeline, as done for officers assigned to military group or attaché duties, the best training for this assignment is experience. The best backup plan is overlap—rotating stations by individual rather than by platoon so that those who are knowledgeable of the unique circumstances of that environment can guide the newest people in their initial steps. When interviewed on the same subject, senior active duty officers in the headquarters concurred with experience as the best preparation. Specifically, they identified prior service in a similar coalition environment as the best groundwork. The second source of preparation mentioned as a key contributor to their current successes was attendance in residence at senior service schools with active international officer participation.⁴

Regardless of quality and energy, the principal limiting factor is still "spin-up" time. For a new action officer coming into an established organization with experienced personnel still at the other "seats," the average time to "on-speed" is 30 days. For those action officers who had an earlier tour at the same or very similar operation, the second "spin-up" was routinely "one week or less."⁵ Experience is the key.

If experience is the key to minimizing spin-up time and the result of the second or third manning rotation through each CCC or similar organization is likely to result in an overwhelming percentage of reservists, perhaps the joint community should look at institutionalizing such an arrangement. A joint reserve unit assigned to each combatant commander would have the necessary expertise in each service specialty and the individual unit members would have routine monthly duties involved with the creation and maintenance of the CCC (as an example) or other wartime functions. Commanders could also use annual two-week training periods to exercise the CCC in a "full-up" mode. In wartime, the same reservists that had designed and scripted the functions of the CCC (or other headquarters or CTF component) would be activated and assigned to the duties for which they had been trained and exercised. Spin-up time under these circumstances would be minimal. Additional training for reservists could also be targeted to improve efficiency.

⁴ For example, the Air War College; interviews, US Central Command, June 2003.

⁵ Per interviews with over 30 action officers, US Central Command, June 2003.

For starters, reservists should have routine access to joint schools like the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) at either the mid level (Joint and Combined Staff Officer School) or senior level (Joint and Combined Warfighting School). Alternatively, the school could construct a specialized curriculum for each combatant command to speed adaptation to CTF operations. Of the 30-plus action officers interviewed at Central Command, the first week in transition was the most difficult. Borrowing somewhat from the Army's concept for capturing "lessons learned,"⁶ the JFSC should consider a faculty team for "trapping" the actual staffing procedures for each function at each CTF. The first product would be a coherent training program for each command that could be used in that initial first week orientation. The second product would be feedback into the joint community on the "how-to" process of running a CTF. Additionally, joint "credit" for reserve officers, and designation as a JSO where appropriate, should also be considered though this has policy implications with regard to the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

Reservists tend to stay with units longer than active duty personnel and a joint unit at each combatant command could also be a secure source for language and cultural experts within each command. This could result, as well, in an increased emphasis on the various services' Foreign Area Officer programs outside of the intelligence communities. Understanding the environment in which we operate is critical to understanding the options we have for success. Trained and retained over the years, these individuals could provide vital and timely inputs to commanders and planners.

Creating, sustaining, and employing a pool of highly qualified and motivated people does more than reduce the spin-up time in a new organization or replacement team. Such a group would have a tremendous advantage over the "come-as-you-are" crew because they would understand the construct of the organization and how it is prepared to meet the mission. This favors both recognition of, and action on, emerging opportunities to improve organizational efficiency. Truly "new" action officers must strive to meet minimum skill levels without the benefit of the experience of others. This is a potentially frustrating time in which suggestions they may have are formulated in a period where their knowledge is incomplete. The result is predictable—their ideas are frequently unused, or counterproductive for reasons beyond their experience.⁷ The standard for action slowly becomes the lowest common denominator (or vice versus) and the momentum for innovation and adaptability is lost. The legacy of this loss is inefficiency and, potentially, ineffectiveness as well. Innovation and adaptability are exactly the traits most needed in the new world order.

⁶ Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL); Ft. Leavenworth, KS; <http://call.army.mil/>.

⁷ Neither is there currently a system of after-action reports in which departing, experienced action officers can relate shortfalls, successes and suggestions for improving efficiency (April-June 2003 interviews).

Section 5

“MNF SOP”

This report, by its very length, defends itself against the risk of being read.

Winston Churchill (1874 – 1965)

The goal of the multinational effort in the Pacific AO is to create a rapidly forming, effective, and efficient response in an ad hoc environment. Additionally, and ideally, they see an interdependent staff and considerable cooperation between the supporting elements. Their vision relates to an observation made earlier in this paper that much of the work to be done in future coalition efforts will revolve around stabilization and humanitarian efforts not associated with (but sometimes in the aftermath of) major unit, force-on-force, fighting. Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement missions will continue to be confusing at times, and dangerous, but routine operations will increasingly include, or operate in parallel with, organizations like the UN World Food Program and the International Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, Medicorps and others. The UN World Food Program, for example, runs emergency and development projects in 83 countries worldwide reaching tens of millions of people annually.¹ International organizations such as these will hopefully be intermixed, as appropriate to their capabilities and cultures, with participating states to form collaborative responses to the missions at hand. This is neither easy to do nor a given that it can be done at all. Many of these organizations, including the International Red Cross, have very explicit cultures of neutrality and independence.² Many additional factors will affect the roster of participants within a given country with the mission itself being the prime driver. Force protection considerations appear to be the principal deterrents. The assumption is, even within this environment of conflicting issues and cultures, that organizations and operations can be

¹ Eighty-three million people in 2000 for example; <http://www.wfp.org/index.asp?section=5>.

² “We ask for no protection. We have to be seen to be independent. We keep away from the military. If you mix the military and humanitarian, it will lead to big confusion,” said Eros Bosisio, Asia spokesperson for the Geneva-based International Committee of the Red Cross. Judy Dempsey, “Aid Agencies Split Over Military Backing,” *London Financial Times*, August 21, 2003.

evolved or tailored to be inclusive of these unlike elements, or at least complementary in focus.³

For the US, the standard organization will include the military⁴ and the State Department with the admixture of other agencies and resources as required (emergency management, law enforcement, investigative expertise, customs, etc.).⁵ This newer “coalition” schematic is suggested by both the changes in our political environment and the new opportunities emerging from the manner in which we see “end states” developing. However, it retains the fundamentals with which we are familiar.

First, it must be structurally predictable.⁶ Participating states and organizations must be able to train the supporting cadres and to develop usable interfaces where applicable. Without a standardized template, this would be nearly impossible. The principal differences are in “adaptability” and have been discussed.

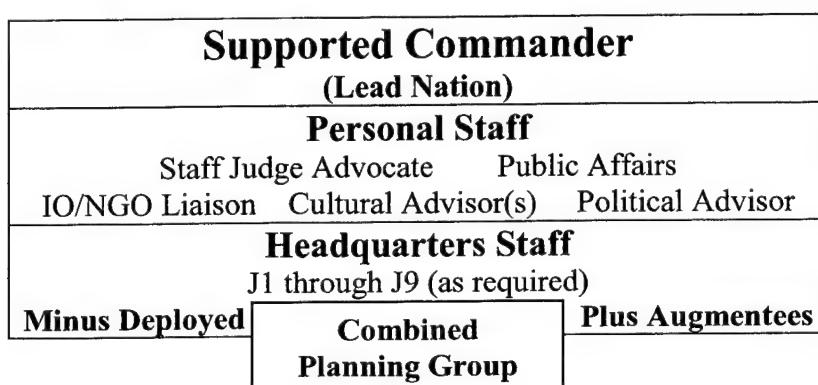


Figure 2. Staff must expand to include coalition and NGO specific positions.

There are many additional personnel and functions in the commander’s personal staff but those shown above have special importance in coalition environments. For example, the Staff Judge Advocate in cooperation with the Political Advisor and other State Department personnel must look at potential *coalition* bed down problems in the earliest planning stages. Since there is no treaty associated with a coalition, each participating state must typically establish its own bi-lateral agreements for deployments and activity. Being a “member” of the coalition carries no special privileges. Each state must negotiate its own status of forces agreement (or equivalent), arrange entry and movement visas as required, and arrange other permissions with the host nation. For

³ “The lines between the military and humanitarian agencies will become blurred,” said Marc Joolen, from Medecin Sans Frontieres. “We do not want to become in any way identified with the military.” Judy Dempsey “Aid Agencies Split Over Military Backing” *London Financial Times*, August 21, 2003.

⁴ If it does not, then this concept is not relevant.

⁵ Referred to collectively as Other Government Agencies (OGA).

⁶ MPAT Operational Start Point #3: Standardized Headquarters Organization, MNF SOP, Chap B 1-1.

example, in Operation Enduring Freedom, one hosting state required another coalition member to include a host nation observer on all of its aircraft missions. This requirement served no useful mission function for the coalition and became a source of friction within the coalition. This may seem minor but it was one of many irritants that pulled at the cohesion of the coalition. In operations like Iraqi Freedom, with its ebb and flow of members and bed downs, this must be continuously monitored. For the MPAT nations, the envisioned multinational staff could have a major problem moving about in its own AO. The supported commander's staff must work to eliminate this sort of problem.

Multinational staffs may have an additional problem. Since the international officers that augment the staff directly—the Combined Planning Group at US Central Command, for example—are not part of the officially “funded” staff, there may be some confusion as to who pays for their relocations and temporary duty assignments. If a US commander chooses to send an international officer to a forward location to make an assessment commensurate with their expertise, can the US pay transportation and per diem expenses associated with that direction? Apparently not; it is the participating nation’s responsibility.⁷ That makes the commander’s request subject to approval by various bureaucracies in each state. And as mentioned earlier, it is also the individual state’s responsibility to ensure that all diplomatic permissions are satisfied. There is a very high premium on coordination and cooperation within the coalition—fractures in that mutual support can, once again, result in time lost.

The Coalition Coordination Center at the strategic level is a primary tool to create and sustain that mutual support. At the US Central Command’s Headquarters in Tampa, Florida, literally dozens of nations are represented in the various on-going coalitions. Its counterpart organization, the Friendly Forces Coordination Center (F2C2), is located forward in the AO. Though every operation must be supported by a tailored organization, the following is proposed for consideration. An explanation follows.

⁷ Interview, US Central Command, June 2003.

National Component (NC) #1	NC #2	NC #3	NC #4	NC #5	NC #6
NC #7	NC #8	NC #9	NC #10	NC #11	NC #12
NC #13	NC #14	CCC HUB	CCC Information Center	NC #17	NC #18
NC #15	NC #16			NC #19	NC #20
Anti-Terrorism Working Group ⁸	Senior Representatives Working Group	Senior Military Representatives Working Group	NC #21 Lead Nation	NC #22	NC #23
NC #24	NC #25	NC #26	NC #27	NC #28	NC #29

Figure 3. Generic Coalition Coordination Center with sample sub-sets.

This partnership at the strategic level is the “Coalition Coordination Center” or CCC. The “CCC HUB” is so named to distinguish it from the CCC as a whole⁹ and it is, or should be, the focus of CCC activity. In a truly multinational operation, the action officers of many nations would work side by side to meet coalition requirements and solve problems. During recent and ongoing US Central Command operations, this has been, in essence, a US-only work area with periodic visits by international officers. The schematic above reflects the multinational approach and calls for the lead nation to maintain its own “National Component” separate from the HUB.

The national component (NC) work area is the “home base” for each participating nation and each individual country would maintain its own state-secure working area and the information systems appropriate to its requirements. The requirements for these NC work areas vary widely—some countries will install state-of-the-art satellite systems and advanced work stations; others will write letters and send them by parcel post to accomplish similar objectives. The personnel assigned to each NC work area would vary by mission and country expertise (e.g., DEA might have an agent assigned to the NC to coordinate search and seizure or surveillance with other US agencies or other coalition assets). Organizationally, the NC resource represents the military and the OGA’s—the internal state bureaucracies (interagency process) necessary to conduct business.

⁸ Working groups shown are examples. Each coalition will generate its own internal structures based on need.

⁹ At USCENTCOM, “going to the CCC” could mean somewhere inside the compound or to the central site for US action officers. Adding “HUB” simply differentiates one from the other.

In the example shown above, the US, as lead nation in Iraqi Freedom, would occupy block 21. The facility would contain the necessary infrastructure to support all US agency involvement in the CCC mission including various US-only networks. Those agencies not required on a daily basis could maintain a virtual presence through this system. As an example, in Operation Enduring Freedom, the US State Department representative played an essential role in setting up the coordination process and ensuring that action officers understood their respective tasks in that process. After a few weeks, that individual returned to Washington, DC. It is important, however, to maintain those sorts of contacts in order to ensure continuity of effort and an appropriate balance on new issues. This is particularly true with long-term events and key personnel rotations. The virtual presence capability in the NC can enable that long distance relationship and can assist in making the system more efficient while sustaining adherence to national policy.

As discussed, sub-sets of the various national components will likely meet as working groups to facilitate the construct of advice to the supported commander. The groups shown in the diagram are simply examples. A range of multilateral, interagency groups will form as needed to support each mission.

At the operational level, the model CTF Headquarters forms as a multinational staff. Neither the MPAT lead nation concept nor the US Central Command experience truly ratifies the necessity of this goal but the “new world” environment will eventually demand that the US commit to this transformation. It is in our interest to do so—the broad coverage of coalition “legitimacy” will enable US ideals and interests where the “superpower act” fails to sway. Simply put, the days of “bulldozing the competition” are numbered.

The operational level CTF headquarters is organized along normal lines with similar exceptions and with the same emphasis on inclusion as shown in the strategic headquarters staffs. The one important addition at this level concerns the orchestration of solutions for humanitarian issues. The Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) is considered by some as “just tactical stuff” but it is imperative that it be included at the operational level or higher for planning.¹⁰ The “CMOC”¹¹ mission should be appraised to ensure that it adequately includes the post-major-conflict transition to peace in the current environment and that it is adequately resourced to complete its mission. However the problem is stated, this area requires and deserves as much attention as every other area of combat, “major” or not. Because of an inadequate transition plan, the US remains in the precarious position of not actually “winning” the peace in Iraq despite its spectacular combat performance.

Perhaps the main venue open to this consideration is the sort of joint planning conducted in the Iraqi theater by NGO’s. Five independent groups (International Medical

¹⁰ “The CMOC does its own thing. That’s tactical stuff; we don’t worry about it.” US Central Command interviews, June 2003.

¹¹ Each circumstance is unique and requires a tailored solution; the function described may be filled through other means such as a Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) or UN coordination center, etc.

Corps, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Save the Children/US, and World Vision) formed the “Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI) for Iraq” to serve as a sort of command post for NGO’s. JNEPI activities are organized, focused, and adaptable and include everything from plans to pre-positioning equipment and supplies to coordination and information sharing. Interestingly, significant sources of funding for JNEPI included the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). However, the International Medical Corps warns its members and other NGO’s to avoid the appearance of being “with the occupiers.” There are over 80 NGO organizations operating in Iraq today.¹²

This is the principal reason for recommending that combatant commanders include liaisons to the NGO community. There is much common ground here but little effective way to communicate. The addition of liaisons, at high levels and specific to the tasks assigned, could enable a faster and more effective transition to real “post-conflict” and stability. This proposal is consistent with the lessons learned and emerging doctrinal changes coming out of Iraqi Freedom.¹³ The expanded use of liaisons is a critical first payment in the cost of transforming forces from the old realm of “deconfliction” to the newer combat set—“integration.” This progress is unimaginable without detailed information exchange between the various components and commanders since “integration” requires much greater knowledge of corollary missions and capabilities than does “deconfliction.” Current information systems lack both the fidelity and confidence engendered by human interaction to accomplish this mission. The result has been hundreds upon hundreds of liaisons and “personal representatives” dispatched to facilitate integration at every unit interface or boundary.¹⁴ The same approach to civil affairs and humanitarian operations is imperative. These sorts of interfaces can enable a more rapid and effective transition to conditions allowing the redeploy of military assets and a real peace.

¹² IMC Press Release, 12 Mar 2003; <http://www.imc-la.com/pressroom/PR031203-iraq.asp>.

¹³ Interviews at Maxwell AFB with visiting officials; interviews at Hurlburt Field with OEF/OIF veterans.

¹⁴ Sending “notetakers” is inadequate; these liaisons are typically hand-picked, highly qualified, mission and/or weapon system experts with good staff skills—the same people who would be in/on the actual mission arena in other circumstances.

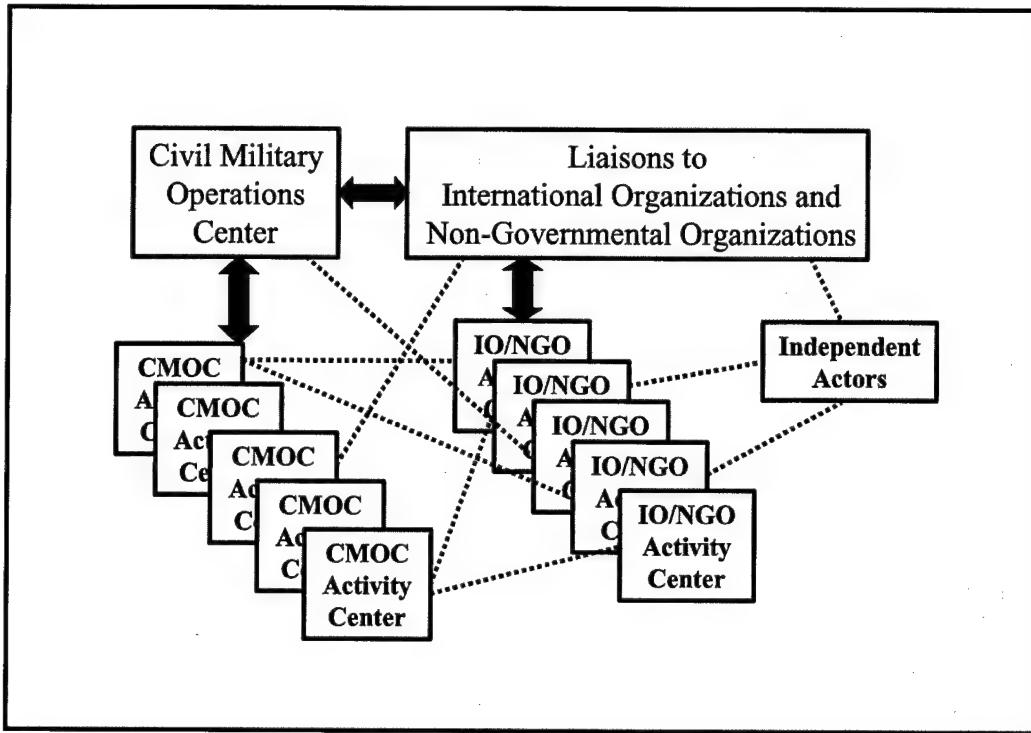


Figure 4. CMOC activities must encourage collaborative solutions with non-state actors.

Despite best intentions, some IO/NGO activities will simply remain outside of any sphere that also includes the military. This increases the importance of other intermediaries or liaisons, including the UN, who may be able to help coordinate mutually supportive efforts. It could be an adjustment in the coalition schedule on demining or bridge repair, or it could be the removal of a particular combat unit from an area now open and ready for food deliveries. The opportunity for communication should not infer control and that is a key point in establishing policy-neutral "liaisons" in lieu of embedded "staff" or "advisors."

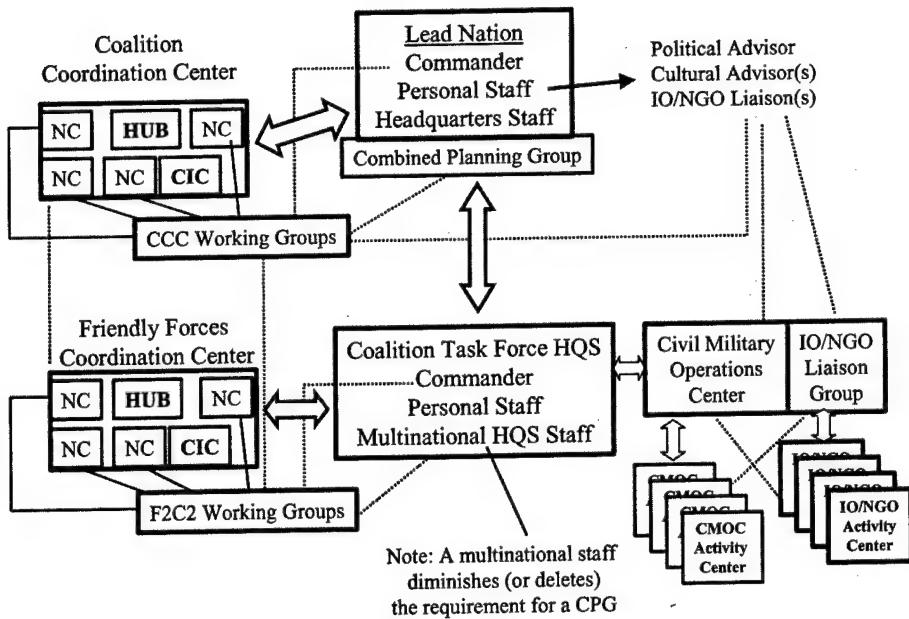


Figure 5. Tailored solutions are always required but inclusive structures will provide commanders with better options and fewer misunderstandings.

The proposed coalition schematics remain very similar to established US doctrinal concepts except where differences foster greater awareness and communication among coalition members and international organizations. Senior leaders have always been aware of the political underpinning of any “victory” on the field but military doctrine and ethos have traditionally focused on combat as the end point of war. Times have changed. A principal entry in the “history of US superpower status” will surely remark on the paucity of enemies stupid enough to take on the US military in a standup fight. We must ensure that US objectives are achieved in a new spectrum of war—one that makes us effective in converting old enemies into new allies.

Section 6

Conclusion

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into something that is alien to its nature.

Carl Von Clausewitz (1780-1831)

The fractious nature of the allied partnership in World War II was a vivid illustration of the strengths and weaknesses of coalitions. Sneak attacks, second fronts, Europe first, strategic bombing, the “soft underbelly” approach, lend-lease, and vast submarine campaigns are just a portion of the vigorously debated policies of the Second World War. Each issue involved competing, and sometimes mutually exclusive, national priorities that often produced rival strategies that reflected each nation’s special interests and post-war goals. Only the overarching threat of annexation or annihilation by Nazi Germany motivated the key allies to find compromise solutions to their differences. Working within the coalition was not particularly easy and not much has changed in that respect.

The very definition of “coalition” confirms its fragility—it is an ad hoc arrangement between two or more nations for common action.¹ Additionally, these relationships are generally focused on narrowly defined objectives in some compressed time frame, after which, the unions are dissolved. The temporal nature of the partnership allows truly diverse states (e.g., Stalin’s Soviet Union and Churchill’s Great Britain) to engage, if briefly, at a point of common interest. These same states, lacking broadly similar national cultures, goals and interests, would rarely find it convenient to form a standing, long-term alliance.²

There can be many benefits to soliciting or joining a coalition for common action. These include increased resources, moral legitimacy for the cause at both the international level and in individual domestic arenas, and burden sharing among the

¹ DOD Dictionary, <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>.

² An *alliance* is the result of formal agreements (i.e., treaties) between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives that further the common interests of the members. <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>.

partners. Among the resource categories, the cultural perspective inherent in the diversity of the partnership is an important addition as well and can aid in understanding the unique planning requirements for missions in an unfamiliar land. The most immediate downside to any large coalition often relates to the compromises that must be made in order to meet or maintain some minimum level of satisfaction for the diverse national interests and priorities of individual members. These compromises can affect practically everything—force structure, end state design, decision-making, timelines and most of the interconnecting parts. “Coalition” in many respects, is synonymous with “compromise.”

The second major observation, or area of review, concerns the transition from combat to end state. War is about political solutions, not numbers of enemy killed or cities taken. Barring a return to ancient end states of annihilation or enslavement, the US military must better prepare for the post-conflict transition to a stabilized end state of our choosing. There are training and equipping issues (more Military Police for example) but a principal deterrent has been a systemic lack of understanding regarding societies and cultures outside our own. Despite our diversity, the US remains in cultural isolation from large blocks of the world. Including socio-cultural strengths in our doctrinal structural is a good starting point. A second consideration is a general upgrade in the way we look at and task our Civil Affairs units.

The critical factor in generating an effective response to a world crisis or natural catastrophe is time, or more bluntly, time lost. Because of the ad hoc nature of the event, interested states must decide who will be involved, how the response will be shaped and how planning and decision-making will be completed. Each state will negotiate its “best-offer” solutions and end states with others, while keeping in mind their own interests, and with a close regard for risk, merit and competing priorities.

The US Central Command and the US Pacific Command have developed distinct approaches to these challenges—a product, to a certain extent, of the cultures represented in the respective AO’s. Interestingly, the results for now are largely similar but continuing along these divergent tracks will ultimately lead to some difficult choices. Fundamentally, US Pacific Command envisions, via its Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) method, an *interdependent* multinational task force and staff responding to crises in the region. The ambition is many nations, sitting side-by-side in every staff, to formulate and achieve a common goal. For now, the focus is on constructing a common planning instrument³ that can serve as the basis for training and initial formation of coalition task force headquarters. In the near term, while awaiting more complete doctrine, documents, training, and a more extensive commitment of people from participating nations, the MPAT relies on a “lead-nation” to function as the organizer and equipper, and to provide the preponderance of staff in the CTF headquarters. To a large extent, this is what the US Central Command already does.

The US Central Command has been at war continuously since 1991. In the aftermath of Operation Desert Storm, and before Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom,

³ The Multinational Force Standing Operating Procedures (MNF SOP).

there were Operations Southern Watch⁴ and Desert Fox among others. There has been little time or incentive for the US Central Command to cultivate long-term engagements with potential coalition partners on notional issues. The reverse is true as well. Potential allies in the AO see all engagement issues with the US in real-time. It is simply not a practical exercise to work diplomatic and military issues for some future and speculative scheme when current events are demanding current decisions in much of the same venue.

The US Central Command also lacks the necessary “crystal ball” to forecast commitments of other nations. Who could have guessed that Spain and Poland would join OIF but Turkey and Germany would not? Even the French are in unusual territory—despite the “required” protestations on US leadership, France has generally been standing next to the US when the fighting started. They were there in Desert Storm; there again in Operation Allied Force. The result of this uncertainty, at US Central Command, has been an improvised planning process where coalitions are concerned. The center of this focus, given the unpredictable and volatile nature of national interests, is the assumption that US forces may have to engage the enemy by themselves. Allies are, in essence, “strapped on” to the planning process rather than interwoven with the development of the courses of action. There are few exceptions.

The myriad of constant, and possible, conflicts and players in the US Central Command area of operations has meshed with its relative youth as a combatant command (compared to EUCOM or PACOM) to yield a very high-energy culture. Similar in ways to its predecessor organization, the Rapid Response Force, US Central Command is tilted toward creating a focused reaction to an emerging condition or opportunity. There has never been a period of extended peace in its area since the command’s inception—it is geared to go every day. Central Command’s universal answer to the unknown is “good people-high energy.”

This US-centric approach to planning is both practical and prudent. The US State Department cannot guarantee what other nations will do or not do, so Central Command simply fills all of the key billets and plans with American personnel and ideas. This avoids the obvious, a critical component promised but not delivered, but it creates its own problems with “tiers” of allies and insiders. This approximates MPAT’s “lead-nation” result in many aspects, as both processes are currently dependent on a single nation to fill the “preponderance” of billets and take charge of planning.

The main differences are in attitude and the potential for growth in the future. The inclusive nature of the MPAT approach contrasts starkly with the exclusive tenor of the US Central Command. US Central Command, however, is at war and there are many “practicalities” that endorse its approach. Neither approach would be appropriate for the other command at this moment. However, as a “new concept of global engagement,”⁵ the MPAT construct is preferable.

⁴ Operation Northern Watch, also a “no-fly zone” operation in Iraq, was a US European Command action.

⁵ SECDEF presentation, 21 Jul 03 at Ft. Leavenworth: “Top Priorities for Next 18 Months (7/03-1/05)”; number 7 concerned “New Concepts of Global Engagement.”

APPENDIX A

Study Observations

1. Constant and non-linear change creates a political environment that favors ad hoc arrangements rather than long-term commitments.
2. Narrowly focused, limited objectives will be the basis of coalition (and alliance) action.
3. Alliances will act more like coalitions—established treaties may not satisfactorily protect emerging national interests and concerns.
4. Each event is unique and each state will view it from its own unique perspective as filtered by its contemporary concerns—predicting/assuming a state's level of engagement is therefore risky.
5. Speed saves lives, coalition and enemy, combatant and noncombatant.
6. Fluid partnerships, fluid objectives, vague relationships and ambiguous metrics are a normal part of the landscape of coalitions and low-end conflicts.
7. Soft interests have the somewhat perverse side-effect of an increased demand for explicit association between resources-allocated and results-expected; almost as if the lesser a country's "interest" in an end state or outcome, the more exacting its demands become for accountability of its resources.
8. Slow laborious "talks" simply represent a prudent caution when national interests are unclear or the potential costs are high in relationship to the desired end state.
9. The tougher questions may lie in assessing and planning for the needs of the area once the majority of unit-level fighting is done.
10. Plans *and* organizations must accommodate fully each country's interests as well as the unpredictability of the commitments.
11. The idea that a single, universally accepted end-state or political objective exists for every discrete event is patently false—there is no perfect solution.
12. No country will ever release fully its military to another country thus parallel commands.
13. Coalition warfare has many advantages, the principal of which may be "legitimacy," both internationally and domestically.
14. Coordination and diplomacy are the obligatory foundations for military success in today's politically charged climate; compromise may be the key to gaining those basics.
15. US doctrine must more adequately reflect working relationships with organizations, agencies, and institutions that lie outside of the traditional nation-state relationships.
16. US doctrine should be changed to reflect *five* elements of national power: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, Economic and Socio-cultural (DIMES).
17. Cultural awareness or "sensitivity" is not simply a case of generic training on crossing your legs or touching someone with your left hand. It requires legitimate area study with expert advice on culture, custom, tradition, and religion and the unique combinations that make each circumstance distinct.
18. The value of the "mission" to individual states in terms of merit, risk and cost will ultimately determine both the coalition and the desired end state.

19. The difficulty in “pre-planning” a coalition lies in finding a sort of universally applicable framework that relates to the potential military missions without inferring some prior diplomatic control of options, especially by the US.
20. Potential false starts and negative trends within the coalition must be overcome at the onset. The “rich get richer” has a relevant opposite here—few countries will find a compelling reason to join a losing team.

APPENDIX B

Examples of Current US Memberships

Global War on Terrorism (Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghanistan): There are currently 70 supporting nations including Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Deutschland, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR of Macedonia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan and Yemen. <http://www.centcom.mil/Operations/Coalition/joint.htm>

Operation Iraqi Freedom: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR of Macedonia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Palau, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Solomon Islands, Republic of Korea, Spain, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, and Uzbekistan.

White House Press Release, 27 March 2003.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030327-10.html>

NATO: Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States. Seven new countries – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia – are expected to join NATO by May 2004. Russia is not a NATO member but has special consultative status.

<http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/index.htm>

Operation Allied Force (Kosovo-Serbia): A NATO action with diplomatic interest from Sweden, Russia and others. No UN resolution or “mandate,” although the 1948 UN Genocide Convention (Article II) was quoted as partial rationale for conflict.

Combined Forces Command (Korea): The successor organization (1978) to the UNC, CFC is a bi-lateral command involving forces from the US and the Republic of Korea.

United Nations Command (Korea): Peak troop strength for the UNC was 932,964 on July 27, 1953 — the day the Armistice Agreement was signed: Republic of Korea — 590,911; Colombia — 1,068; United States — 302,483; Belgium — 900; United Kingdom — 14,198; South Africa — 826; Canada — 6,146; The Netherlands — 819; Turkey — 5,453; Luxembourg — 44; Australia — 2,282; Philippines — 1,496; New Zealand — 1,385; Thailand — 1,204; Ethiopia — 1,271; Greece — 1,263; France — 1,119. Additionally, Denmark, India, Norway, and Sweden provided medical units. Italy provided a hospital even though at the time it was not a member of the UN.

Biographical Sketch

Robyn Read joined the Airpower Research Institute in 2003. In his preceding 30-year Air Force career, he served as a forward air controller, tanker pilot, munitions test engineer, research pilot, staff officer, and squadron commander. He also worked security assistance issues for two years with the US Military Group in Bogotá, Colombia. Additionally, in two faculty tours at the Air War College, he taught core courses in *Strategy, Doctrine & Airpower* and *International Security Studies*.

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